

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A user authentication method suitably for use in mobile information terminals, which minimizes user load in entering information necessary for user authentication while ensuring security is disclosed. Before using a service to be provided by a client service provider on the Internet, the user registers his user personal information including the unique identification information of a mobile information terminal with the client service provider. Then, when the user of the mobile information terminal uses a content server via the client service provider by use of the mobile information terminal, the mobile information terminal sends the encrypted unique identification information. The client service provider decrypts the received encrypted unique identification information and performs user authentication on the basis of the decrypted unique identification information. The client service provider also checks a charging surrogate service server for the registration of the user. If the user is authenticated and found registered, the client service provider permits the content server to provide a service requested by the user of the mobile information terminal.